

Drought Snapshots from 20th Century America

1930s
The decade-long drought affected more than 60% of the nation. It turned millions of acres into the Dust Bowl across the Great Plains, caused a huge migration from the southern Plains to California, and revolutionized agriculture policy on the Plains.

1950
to
1956
Drought across the Southwest and southern Plains claimed millions of cattle and forced hundreds of ranchers to ship their livestock to other regions of the country, then moved northward to affect much of the central United States.

1967
to
1966
Many parts of the Northeast experienced a drought of record. President Lyndon Johnson called an emergency meeting to mediate controversies between New York and Pennsylvania over water allocation along the Delaware River.



1976
to
1977
Lack of winter snowfall resulted in extreme drought conditions in the Pacific Northwest and California. This drought was short lived. Nevertheless it placed great stress on water supplies.

Mid 1980s
to
mid 1990s
Prolonged drought lasting up to seven years hit California and the Pacific Northwest. The Midwest and parts of the Southeast experienced drought emergencies in 1988.

1990s
Hawaii faced several years of drought, and the southeastern and mid-Atlantic states felt the impacts of one of the worst droughts in 100 years, which extended through parts of the Northeast.